



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 525
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012-2766
PHONE: (213) 974-8301 FAX: (213) 626-5427

J. TYLER McCAULEY
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

July 14, 2004

TO: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley 
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – AZIZA GROUP
HOME CORPORATION, AZIZA GROUP HOME**

We have completed a review of Aziza Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by Aziza Group Home Corporation. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Aziza Group Home is a six-bed facility, which provides care for boys ages 14-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Aziza Group Home was providing services for six Los Angeles County DCFS children. Aziza Group Home is located in the Fourth District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review was to determine whether the Agency was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covered basic child safety and licensing issues, and included an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, facility inspections, and interviews with two children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with the residents were designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency, and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Generally, the Agency was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement. However, the Agency needs to make numerous repairs to its facility; document the placement workers' participation in the development and update of the Needs and

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Services Plans; ensure that staff treats residents with respect and dignity; provide residents with the required minimum weekly allowance; and provide residents with the opportunity to maintain life books.

Attached is a detailed report of the review findings.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. The Agency's management is required to provide a corrective action plan to the Children's Group Home Ombudsman within 15 business days from the receipt of this report. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact DeWitt Roberts at (626) 293-1101.

JTM:DR:CC:gw

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
Richard Shumsky, Chief Probation Officer
Javaid Aslam, Executive Director, Aziza Group Home
Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**Aziza Group Home
2611 Rising Star Drive
Los Angeles, CA 91765
Phone: (909) 869-0412
License No.: 197800917
Rate Classification Level: 9**

I. Facility and Environment

(Facility Based - No Sample)

Method of assessment – Observation and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The Aziza Group Home (Group Home or Agency) is a large facility located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is marginally maintained. Paint is peeling from the exterior of the home and the garage, the driveway is not paved, and the cemented patio area has large cracks presenting a safety hazard.

The interior décor of the Group Home provides a home-like atmosphere. The resident bedrooms are spacious and personalized to each child's desire with posters, pictures, and knick-knacks.

However, there are areas that need improvement. Specifically, in the kitchen, the cabinet doors, walls, shelf lining, and carpeting in the pantry are not clean. In the dining room, the walls and ceiling are not clean. In the living room, the walls and mini blinds are not clean and some of the mini blind slats are cracked or missing. In the recreation room, the chair and walls are not clean. In the hallway, the walls are not clean and the tile floor is damaged.

In the bathroom, the bathtub, shower stall, tub fixtures, and sink vanity are not clean. The carpet in the storage room is not clean. In the staff office, the tile floor is damaged and is not clean.

In bedroom number one, one bed does not have a mattress pad and there is an iron burn mark on the carpet. In bedroom number three, the only source of light is a small desk lamp, the mini blinds have broken slats, and there are stains on the carpet.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a VCR. There are books and resource materials. However, the computers are non-operable and the basketball hoop has a cracked backboard and is located in a non cemented area making play difficult.

There is a sufficient supply of frozen food, meat, canned goods, bakery items, and fresh fruit. The food is accessible, appropriately dated, and properly stored.

Recommendations

1. Aziza Group Home management:

- a. Repaint the house and garage.**
- b. Repave the driveway and repair the patio area.**
- c. Clean the kitchen cabinets and replace the shelf lining.**
- d. Clean the carpeting, walls, and ceilings throughout the Group Home as needed.**
- e. Replace the mini blinds in the living room and in bedroom number three.**
- f. Clean or replace the chair in the recreation room.**
- g. Replace the tile floors in the hallway and staff office.**
- h. Clean the bathroom shower stall, bathtub, fixtures, and vanity.**
- i. Replace the mattress pad in bedroom number one.**
- j. Provide sufficient lighting in bedroom number three.**
- k. Replace the broken computers.**
- l. Cement the basketball area and replace the backboard.**

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The residents meet the Agency's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Residents received a complete initial diagnostic assessment after being admitted into the Agency's program.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current, realistic, measurable, and time specific. However, there was no documentation to support the placement workers' participation in the development or update of the NSPs.

The residents' quarterly reports are current, comprehensive, and appropriately focus on the goals of the NSP.

The residents are provided with psychological testing, and emotional and developmental counseling as required by the Program Statement.

Recommendations

- 2. Aziza Group Home management provide documentation to show placement workers' participation in the development or update of the Needs and Services Plans.**

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The residents attend continuation school. Both records contain current semester report cards and/or progress reports for the residents. Residents reported that they are provided with a sufficient amount of daily educational stimulation away from school and feel that the Group Home is supportive of their academic progress.

The Agency's program includes the development of residents' daily living skills. The residents are involved in the planning and preparation phase of meals. Hygiene care is discussed as needed and employment preparation encouraged.

Residents are not offered the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs. Residents are not enrolled in Independent Living classes (ILP). The Agency administrator stated that the residents were enrolled, but dropped the ILP class. The Agency administrator also stated that the Group Home provides emancipation services through their treatment plans. However, documentation of the treatment plans was not maintained by the Agency.

Residents have the opportunity to work and manage their own money.

Recommendations

- 3. Aziza Group Home management provide appropriate residents with emancipation and vocational programs and document the residents' participation in the programs.**

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The Agency provides its residents opportunities to participate in recreational activities. The residents expressed satisfaction with the recreational activities and stated that the recreation schedules are followed.

The Group Home utilizes local community organizations for recreational and program resources. The residents reported that they participate in planning some of the activities. The residents have free time and are able to participate in self-selected activities.

Transportation is provided to and from the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

According to the Agency, there are no residents receiving psychotropic medications. This information is appropriately documented.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment – Resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

One resident expressed satisfaction with the Agency and its staff. However, the other resident expressed dissatisfaction with the Agency. The resident stated that the rules change from staff member to staff member and that the staff was sometimes disrespectful. According to the Agency's Administrator, there is on-going training for staff to improve their relationships with the residents. The Administrator stated that one particular staff person that had difficulties in this area is no longer with the Agency.

Residents participate in an initial orientation and the Group Home's policies and procedures are posted. Residents reported that they feel safe in the Group Home and that there is no interference with their daily living functions.

Residents reported satisfaction with the taste of the food and with their ability to participate in menu development. They reported that there is sufficient staff supervision.

Residents reported that they are assigned chores to complete on a daily basis that are reasonable and not too demanding. Residents are able to have visitors and make and receive personal telephone calls. They are permitted to contact their social workers, attorneys, and family members as needed. Residents are able to attend weekly religious services of their choice and feel that the Agency is respectful of their cultural lifestyles. The Agency allows the residents to celebrate holidays.

Residents reported that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Residents are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendation

- 4. Aziza Group Home management ensure that staff treat residents with respect and dignity and monitor their interactions.**

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The Agency provides clothing, items of necessity, and allowances to the residents. The Group Home supplies its residents with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance

and the residents are given the opportunity to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to residents is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Agency does not provide residents with the required minimum base allowance. However, residents are able to increase their allowance according to the Agency's behavioral system. The Agency's administrator stated that allowances are reduced as a form of restitution for damages caused by residents in the Group Home. The administrator was not aware of the required minimum allowance.

The Agency provides residents with adequate personal care items and adequate storage.

The residents did not have life books.

Recommendations

5. Aziza management:

- a. Provide residents with the required minimum weekly allowance.**
- b. Provide residents with the opportunity to maintain life books.**